

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 091036Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1002

INFO USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 2541

FOR NEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR TOON'S BACKGROUND BRIEFING, APRIL 8

1. EMBASSY RECEIVED TODAY COPY OF FOLLOWING PROTEST SENT BY DELANEY, NBC AND HEAD OF FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION, TO CHIEF OF ISRAEL BROADCASTING AUTHORITY IN REGARD TO BACKGROUND BRIEFING GIVEN YESTERDAY BY AMBASSADOR TOON.

2. "THE FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION IN ISRAEL EXPRESSES ITS DISGUST WITH THE MABAT REPORT ON AMBASSADOR MALCOM TOON'S REMARKS, BROADCAST ON THE NIGHT OF APRIL 8TH.

3. "IT WAS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF UNETHICAL JOURNALISM, AND TO USE A QUOTE FROM THE REPORT, DIRTY POOL.

4. "FOR YOUR REPORTER TO STATE THAT HE KNEW THE BRIEFING WAS A BACKGROUND SESSION, AND THEN TO SAY THAT SINCE HE WAS NOT THERE HE DID NOT FEEL BOUND BY THE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON QUOTES AND ATTRIBUTIONS, IS A CHILLINGLY BLATANT EXAMPLE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE REPORTER ADMITS IN HIS STORY THAT HE WAS NOT THERE AND IS REPORTING SECOND-HAND INFORMATION.

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5. "I WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT A REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL

RADIO WAS ADMITTED TO THE BRIEFING, WHICH WAS SPONSORED BY THE FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION, ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY PRESS PEOPLE HAD NO OBJECTION TO HIS PRESENCE.

6. "THAT REPORTER FILED A FAIR AND ACCURATE STORY AND HAS BEEN UNJUSTLY ACCUSED OF A BREACH OF ETHICS FOR WHICH HIS TELEVISION COLLEAGUE IS PROPERLY TO BLAME.

7. "BY EXTENSION THE ENTIRE PRESS CORPS IN ISRAEL IS BEING BLAMED BY THE MECHANISM OF GUILT BY ASSOCIATION. IT IS QUITE PROBABLE THAT FOREIGN AND LOCAL PRESS HAVE NOW LOST ANY ACCESS TO INFORMATION FROM THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR AND THAT WE ARE ALL BEING PENALIZED BECAUSE OF AN INDEFENSIBLE BREACH OF ETHICS BY ONE OF YOUR EMPLOYEES. QUITE FRANKLY IT BECOMES TIRESOME TO KEEP DEFENDING THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS AGAINST THE EXAMPLES OF NON-PROFESSIONALISM WHICH YOUR ORGANIZATION TURNS OUT WITH GREAT FREQUENCY.

8. "AS A FOREIGN PRESS REPRESENTATIVE I HAVE NO INFLUENCE OVER THE STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS PRACTICED BY YOUR ORGANIZATION, BUT WHEN THAT CONDUCT RESULTS IN THE LOSS TO THE FOREIGN PRESS OF AN IMPORTANT NEWS SOURCE, I PROTEST.

9. "I CAN ASSURE YOU IT WILL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE ANOTHER REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISRAEL BROADCASTING AUTHORITY IS ADMITTED TO A NEWS FUNCTION SPONSORED BY THE FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION IN ISRAEL. REGARDS, STEVE DELANEY, CHAIRMAN, FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION IN ISRAEL."

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